

CHARACTER



Tolerance/Valuing Diversity

October 2004

Tolerance: “is a fair and objective attitude toward those whose opinions, practices, race, religion, nationality, etc., differ from one’s own.”

“What is tolerance?—it is the consequence of humanity. We are all formed of frailty and error; let us pardon reciprocally each other’s folly—that is the first law of nature.” Voltaire

City Councilman Jeff Acerson tells of an experience he had on his LDS mission in Italy. He had an eccentric and difficult missionary companion. In meeting with his mission president he learned a valuable lesson. Before he could say a word about the situation the mission president asked him “Are you looking for the good?” As Councilman Acerson actively looked for the good in his difficult companion, they began to work together effectively. We can be a better community by “looking for the good” in our various religions, cultures and personalities.

My nephew met a Russian girl at their neighborhood park in Phoenix. The girl spoke only Russian and my nephew only English. Chance quite naturally included the girl in the games he was playing with the other children. He saw her often at the park and enjoyed involving her in the fun. These preschoolers seemed quite oblivious to the obvious barriers to their friendship. Chance attended Adriadna’s birthday party. My sister loved the experience of learning about the family’s background, eating their traditional foods, and playing traditional Russian games. Friendship grew in the face of diverse backgrounds, language and culture. The implications of acceptance on the playground for world peace and understanding are profound.

This summer my parents were involved in a joint activity that involved Mormons and Catholics working side by side to clean up a lot adjacent to their churches. They enjoyed a BBQ after the clean up. Christian neighbors working side by side focusing more on what they have in common than on their differences.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, “Whenever I meet people I always approach them from the standpoint of the most basic things we have in common. We each have a physical structure, a mind, emotions. We are all born in the same way, and we all die. All of us want happiness and do not want to suffer. Looking at others from this standpoint rather than emphasizing secondary differences such as the fact that I am Tibetan, or a different color, religion, or cultural background, allows me to have a feeling that I’m meeting someone just the same as me.”

From 1889 until his death in 1894, author Robert Louis Stevenson lived in Samoa. He was loved and respected by the Samoan people. On one occasion he traveled to Hawaii taking one of his Samoan servants along. One evening he was in a bar where a wealthy, successful American, learning of his identity wanted to speak with him and buy him a drink. Robert L. Stevenson agreed, bringing along his Samoan servant. The American was uncomfortable with having a “native” and a servant as their drinking companion. Robert L. Stevenson stood and said “If this bar is not good enough for my friend, it is not good enough for me.” He then left with his Samoan friend.

In our community we do an incredible job of taking care of our own. May we define “our own” in the light of the Master teacher’s tale of the Good Samaritan.

“Let our thoughts, our words, and deeds, ever be pure, kind and good. Let us live peaceably with each other, respecting one another in love. Let us see the good in our fellow man, that we may love our neighbors as ourselves.” Amish prayer

Thaylene Rogers
Lindon Resident

*“I have learnt
silence from the talkative,
toleration from the
intolerant, and kindness
from the unkind; yet
strange, I am ungrateful
to these teachers.” -
Kahlil Gibran*

“The highest
result of education
is tolerance.”
—Helen Keller

*“Tolerance and
celebration of
individual
differences is the fire
that fuels lasting
love.”
—Tom Hannah*

Book List

**White Dynamite and
Curly Kidd**
by Bill Martin

**Babushka Baba
Yaga!**
by Patricia Polacco

So Far From The Sea
by Eve Bunting

The Long March
by Marie-Louise
Fitzpatrick

Tacky the Penguin
by Helen Lester

Smoky Night
by Eve Bunting



Family Activities

–**Retell the folk story of “Stone Soup.”** Afterwards, let each family member add his favorite soup ingredient to a broth. *Talk about the flavor each ingredient adds and the value of variety.*

–**Sing a song in unison.** Sing it again, this time adding alto, tenor, and bass. *Talk about the richness of variety.*

–**Give each person a different color of crayon.** Have each family member use only his crayon as he draws a picture of a house with a sunset in the background. Admire the pictures. Next, have everyone draw the same picture, this time using all of the crayons. *How is variety the spice of life?*

–**William Penn was born on October 14, 1644.** He founded Pennsylvania and wanted its settlers to enjoy religious freedom, as well as personal and property rights. Although King Charles had granted this region to him, he also paid the Indians for this same land. In fact, because his dealings with the Indians were fair, they never attacked his colony. *How can we be more tolerant of those of differing religions, race, and abilities?*

_____ By Laura Clement

Kid’s Corner

“To Know All is to Forgive All”
By Nixon Waterman

If I knew you and you knew me—
If both of us could clearly see,
And with an inner sight divine
The meaning of your heart and mine—
I’m sure that we would differ less
And clasp our hands in friendliness;
Our thoughts would pleasantly agree
If I knew you and you knew me.
would see,

If I knew you and you knew me,
As each one knows his own self, we
Could look each other in the face
And see therein a truer grace.

Life has so many hidden woes,
So many thorns for every rose;
The “why” of things our hearts

If I knew you and you knew me.

We, at Character Connection would like to focus on helping parents access character materials this year by using the web site located at www.thecharacterconnection.com. If you are interested in receiving a monthly reminder of the character traits and access to resource materials, please e-mail your address to arlainea@isquaredinc.com

Character Connection is a not-for-profit organization encouraging the enhancement of character development in our community. We are accepting financial support, if you can help please send contributions to:
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